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UNCLAS ALGIERS 001049

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CCA JHILLSMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [AG](#)  
SUBJECT: TITLE III OF THE LIBERTAD ACT: ALGERIA

¶1. (U) Summary: Algeria does nothing to promote democracy and human rights in Cuba, or to help Cuban civil society. Algeria's commercial relationship with Cuba is focused on health care, pharmaceutical production, and energy. End summary.

Democracy, Human Rights, Civil Society  
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¶2. (U) Algeria has done nothing to promote the advancement of human rights in Cuba. It has made no statements nor supported any UN resolutions condemning human rights abuses in Cuba, nor undertaken any action in support of Cuban civil society. This stance stems from Algeria's close relationship with Cuba, which dates from the early days of Algeria's independence.

Algerian/Cuban Diplomatic Engagement  
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¶3. (U) Raul Castro made a three-day state visit to Algeria in February, at the conclusion of which he and President Bouteflika stated that relations between the two countries were "clear and satisfactory." Discussions focused primarily on bilateral efforts in the medical and agriculture sectors.

¶4. (U) President Bouteflika met with Raul Castro again in Algiers July 12-13. They discussed ongoing bilateral cooperation and their participation in the non-aligned movement (NAM) meetings, which took place that same week in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The Algerian Prime Minister, Minister-delegate of Defense and Minister of Telecommunications also participated in Bouteflika's meeting with Castro.

¶5. (U) President Bouteflika visited Cuba for three days in late September/early October following his participation in UNGA and the Latin America-Africa summit in Caracas, Venezuela. He met with Raul and Fidel Castro.

Algerian Investments in Cuba  
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¶6. (U) Post knows of no direct Algerian investment in Cuba, but a number of pharmaceutical agreements may have an investment component.

Algeria/Cuba Bilateral Trade and Cooperative Agreements  
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¶7. (U) Bouteflika's September-October Cuba visit saw the signing of a memorandum for the facilitation of travel and visas/residence permits for communities of the two countries, and a consular convention. In the context of that visit, Algerian Foreign Minister Medelci stated that bilateral cooperation would extend to agriculture, restoration of old housing, training in different sectors, and unspecified Algerian refining, petrochemical, and oil exploration

projects with Cuba. Post believes that a 2001 agreement covering the delivery of Algerian oil and oil derivatives to Cuba in exchange for medicines, vaccines, machinery, and sugar is still in effect.

¶18. (U) The principal areas of Algeria-Cuba trade and cooperation are the health and pharmaceuticals sectors. Algeria has a health cooperation agreement with Cuba that covers the presence of a number of Cuban doctors in Algeria. The two countries are expanding cooperation on production of pharmaceuticals. A delegation from the state-owned Algerian pharmaceutical company Sidal visited Cuba the week of October 3 and signed three agreements. The first was between Sidal and the Cuban companies Heber Biotec, Cimab, Vacunas Finlay, Cenpalar, and Damler. It covers the transfer of technologies to Algeria for the production of vaccines and biopharmaceutical products, as well as Cuban assistance in the construction of production facilities in Algeria. The second was between Sidal and Quimefa and covers the production and commercialization of generic drugs in Algeria. The third agreement was between Sidal and Medicuba for the sale of Algerian drugs in the Cuban market. In the context of President Bouteflika's fall 2009 visit to Cuba, Algerian Foreign Minister Medelci explained that health cooperation would also focus on ophthalmology, podiatry, neurology, general surgery, and radiotherapy.

¶19. (U) Cuba has already built an ophthalmology hospital in Djelfa and is building three similar hospitals in Bechar, el-Oued, and Ouargla (all in the South of Algeria). These will be operational toward the end of 2009. There are plans to build three more in Setif, Tlemcen, and Tamanrasset.

Algeria/Cuba Exchange Programs

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¶10. (U) The above-mentioned health cooperation agreement covers the presence of Cuban doctors in Algeria. A certain number of Algerian nationals and Western Sahara refugees resident in Algeria study in Cuba. Cuban doctors and other advisers regularly visit Sahrawi refugee camps near the Algerian city of Tindouf.

PEARCE